

Town of Marana

# Economic Roadmap



March 2, 2010

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# INTRODUCTION

The Town of Marana and its leadership are committed to building a sustainable community and high-performing organization. To achieve this objective, a strategic, proactive approach has been implemented to address all facets of the community. In fall 2008, the Town Council and management staff completed a visioning and strategic planning process that resulted in the Marana Strategic Plan. This Plan identifies five Focus Areas where the Town's efforts and resources should be directed.

The Strategic Plan recognizes the importance of and provides policy direction for Marana to take steps to build a diverse and thriving local and regional economy that will create career-oriented jobs and community wealth.

The creation of this document, the *Marana Economic Roadmap* (hereinafter referred to as *Roadmap*), is one of the Initiatives within the Marana Strategic Plan Commerce Center Focus Area. However, the Strategic Plan's other four Focus Areas are directly related to the *Roadmap* and play an integral role in the success of its implementation

## Marana Strategic Plan Focus Area: Commerce Center

Goal: Build upon the unique combination of assets to attract and maintain career-oriented commerce.



The *Roadmap* was an identified initiative within this Focus Area. The objective is to develop Marana as a world-class commerce and business center that creates a range of high quality employment opportunities. The *Roadmap* is intended to provide the strategy to achieve this objective.

## Marana Strategic Plan Focus Area: Community Building

Goal: Create a safe community with a strong sense of place where diverse people are motivated to be involved and feel connected, needed and appreciated.



Business and investment are attracted to communities with sound infrastructure and reliable, high-quality services coupled with an engaged citizenry. Economic growth is also dependent on health care, a range of housing choices, and the community's cohesiveness, issues that are all addressed in this Focus Area of the Marana Strategic Plan.

## Marana Strategic Plan Focus Area: Progress & Innovation

Goal: Foster an open atmosphere that embraces change, creativity, innovation and calculated risk.



Marana strives for continual quality improvement through creativity and innovation. Today's business climate demands the same from the private sector. Businesses will be looking for communities that align with this atmosphere of progress and innovation to address rapid change.

## **Marana Strategic Plan Focus Area: Heritage that Ties the Past to the Future**

Goal: To maintain a sense of community character by linking the past, present and future.



The *Roadmap* recognizes that economic success is dependent on maintaining the uniqueness and quality of life of a community. Marana has a rich and diverse history that, if showcased properly, can position it to become a visitor destination that will attract business growth and development. Marana's heritage will also continue to be a point of pride and unifying community force.

## **Marana Strategic Plan Focus Area: Recreation Capital of Arizona**

Goal: Showcase the unique Sonoran Desert environment by providing diverse recreational opportunities that create economic benefits and accommodate a healthy lifestyle.



High quality recreational opportunities are not only important to bring visitors to the community but more and more firms are looking for locations where employees can lead an active and healthy lifestyle. Developing Marana as a recreation center will provide significant positive economic impacts.

A successful economy depends on so many factors within a community, all of the Focus Areas and Goals are addressed in the *Roadmap* as they relate to strengthening the local and regional economy.

Marana is also in the heart of the Sun Corridor; one of 20 megapolitan areas identified across the United States by demographers as areas where the majority of growth will occur in the future. The Sun Corridor is projected to combine to form one of the 10 "megaregions" where the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech University expects that the next 100 million U.S. residents will live. The Sun Corridor Megapolitan region stretches from the Prescott area to the border of Mexico including the I-17, I-10, and I-19 corridors. This offers Marana tremendous opportunities but also many challenges.

## **Marana's Economic Development Basics**

The importance of building a diverse and vibrant economy in Marana cannot be overstated. Without importing wealth and revenues to the community with the ability to retain them, the Town's aspirations for the future will not be met. This can be explained very simply as creating a "basic" and "non-basic" balanced economy.

Basic economic activity is the process of bringing new dollars into the community. This activity can come in a wide range of forms from a tourist staying at a local hotel to a manufactured product

made in Marana being sold to a business half-way around the world. In either case, money has come into the community that was not there before which creates jobs and wealth.

Non-basic activity is the process of keeping dollars already in the local economy in Marana. The longer that dollar stays in the local economy, the more jobs and businesses it creates and maintains.

Since the Town of Marana depends heavily on locally generated sales tax revenues to provide infrastructure, amenities, and services, local basic and non-basic economic activity is critical.

Some activities can be both basic and non-basic in nature and occur simultaneously. A restaurant could be serving a meal to a visitor (basic) right next to a table of local residents (non-basic). In any case, it is necessary for Marana to have a balance of both activities to achieve economic success.

## How Your Local Economy Works



In addition to the basic economics, there are numerous quality of life issues impacted by the local economy. Creating jobs close to where Marana's residents live will be even more important in the future. The Sun Corridor is expected to contain over 10 million people by the year 2030 and moving people and goods throughout will be ever more challenging and expensive. Having a full service community will cut down on commute times and costs allowing Marana's residents to spend

more time enjoying their families and community – and keeping dollars here. Lower commute distances will also positively impact air quality.

Creating career-oriented employment will also allow Marana's residents to stay in the community as their skills grow. A non-transient population provides a sense of permanence that successful communities strive for.

## ***A. The Planning Process***

The *Roadmap* development process was led by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisting of representatives from local businesses, utility providers, regional economic development entities, the Town's Business and Economic Development Advisory Commission, Town Council and key town staff. A list of TAC members can be found on the Acknowledgements page. The TAC met six times during the process. The process was facilitated by a technical consultant specializing in community and economic development strategic planning. The consultant was also responsible for drafting all materials and this document.

## ***B. Plan Overview***

This document has been developed to complement and support the Marana Strategic Plan. Like that plan, the *Roadmap* contains an Action Plan that contains Focus Areas, Goals, Initiatives and Action Strategies. The *Roadmap's* Focus Areas are:

- Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion
- Resource/Business Support
- Workforce Development
- Tourism and Visitor Experience
- Community and Infrastructure Development

In addition to the Action Plan, the *Roadmap* contains two other key components: Target Industries and Activity Centers.

**Target Industries** are defined as potential businesses or industries that might choose to locate in Marana because of its economic or geographic assets. Target industries were identified in order to avoid taking a "shotgun" approach to business development. While Marana will gladly welcome any business that complements the community's vision and values, there are limited resources available to proactively develop new employment opportunities. Marana's existing and potential assets were carefully examined in order to define its competitive advantage. Only those business segments or target industries where Marana can be most successful will be aggressively pursued through the allocation of resources.

**Activity Centers** are defined areas of current or future concentrated development that offer unique economic development opportunities. Activity Centers were identified in order to focus resources and provide special areas where different types of economic opportunities can be targeted and accommodated. Marana has myriad assets from the high Sonoran Desert setting to

the high intensity I-10 corridor. While very different, both provide a unique platform for economic opportunities.

One of the key elements of Marana's economy that is not specifically addressed in this plan is the retail and service sector of the economy. As mentioned earlier, this is an essential sector not only to service the population and visitors but to provide revenues to the Town.

Since the location decisions for these types of businesses are typically made by analyzing population and number of households, it was determined that this sector would develop proportionally as the community grows without a proactive attraction approach. It is the Town's responsibility through its planning and zoning processes to ensure that there are plentiful attractive and accessible sites for these business activities throughout the community.

## ***C. Marana's Economic Vision and Economic Development Definition***

### **Economic Vision**

Following are the characteristics of Marana's economy if the community were successful in implementing the *Roadmap*. These desired future conditions, or economic vision components, were not only used in the development of the *Roadmap* but will also be used to evaluate success.

- Connectivity and accessibility between quality jobs and residential areas
- Education that drives the economy and produces a strong labor pool
- Multi-generational/diverse- Marana provides opportunities for all stages of life
- Recognized as a premier destination
- The Marana Regional Airport is a focal point of the economy
- Marana maintains a strong vision and clear sense of place
- The community has an economic identity and reputation for supporting business
- The economy is diverse and not dependent on one business sector
- Marana has taken full advantage of its transportation assets
- There has been a focus on developing community amenities to attract businesses, investment and visitors

### **Economic Development Definition**

Economic development in Marana consists of the building of public/private sector partnerships to attract and retain a diverse business and employment base, support new local businesses, develop amenities and attractions to create a world class destination and provide a high quality workforce, all of which will move the community toward its vision.



## II. TARGET INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

The *Roadmap* planning process included a comprehensive SWOT Analysis that identified Marana's internal Strengths and Weaknesses and external Opportunities and Threats. Other economically successful communities in Arizona were also analyzed.

Extensive research and analysis of regional assets and potential economic development opportunities was recently completed by Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities (TREO). TREO is a non-profit organization funded by local governments and businesses and is responsible for providing research, marketing, and business recruitment services to grow the regional economy. The results of their research were outlined in the *TREO Economic Blueprint*, which identifies targeted industries that offer the Tucson area the most potential and match regional assets.

Building upon all of this information, Marana identified the following industries to target that best match the community's assets and align with its vision.

- Environmental technology (focusing on solar industry)
- Bio- and medical sciences
- Analytical Instruments (medical devices)
- Advanced services (including transportation logistics)
- Education (including vocational training)
- Tourism (entertainment, retail, etc.)
- High-Technology (engineering, electronics, optics, semiconductors, aeronautics, defense, etc.)

An additional opportunity identified for Marana is to meet the supplier needs of existing industries. Several large firms within the region must purchase supplies or send work to out of state firms because the products or services they need are not locally available. To capitalize on this business leakage, Marana will target companies that can provide support to existing regional industries. A Regional Industry Cluster Support target was created that Marana can begin to promote immediately.

The remaining industries were all considered important and offered potential future opportunities for Marana, but should not be the immediate focus for the community's efforts.

### *A. Initial Targets*

#### **Transportation Logistics**

Transportation Logistics is defined as businesses that move and store goods for distribution to regional, national, or international markets. TREO has identified 150 firms in the transportation and logistics industry within the Tucson region in its recent Tucson Regional Inland Port Strategic Implementation Plan published in March 2009. These types of businesses look for multiple transportation options, convenient access to markets, and system reliability. Marana has many



assets such as its rail and highway infrastructure, airport options, and favorable weather to offer this industry in addition to its geographic location close to the Tucson, Phoenix, California and Mexico markets.

These types of activities often require large parcels of land in addition to the transportation infrastructure. Key partners in growing this market will be the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), Union Pacific Railroad, Pinal Airpark and TREO.

## **Tourism and Visitor Experience**

In the heart of the Sonoran Desert with recreational amenities and world class resort facilities, tourism is a natural target for Marana. A successful tourism and visitor experience effort brings new dollars to the community. It also exposes the community to prospective new businesses and business owners. The Town's focus on being "The Recreation Capital of Arizona" and its emphasis on heritage development will position Marana as a diverse visitor destination with many options that will appeal to a wide audience. Today's travelers are looking for more than just good weather – they want to be active and learn.

Key partners will include the Marana Chamber of Commerce, Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau, regional attractions, and the hospitality industry.

## **Regional Industry Cluster Support**

The aerospace, aviation services and defense industries have a strong presence in the Tucson region and specifically in the Marana area. While at the present time, Marana does not have the foundations in place (e.g., infrastructure, an industrial park, etc.) to justify expending resources to actively pursue these types of primary employers, there are significant opportunities for support businesses and suppliers to be attracted to Marana. The focus of this target is to reduce the need for local businesses to seek contractors or suppliers for goods or services from out of the region and/or state firms. Attracting these suppliers to Marana will create jobs locally and keep dollars in the area.

Key partners will include the Marana Chamber of Commerce and Pima Community College to provide business assistance and training, TREO, and existing local and regional businesses to participate in developing the supply chain.

## ***B. Emerging Opportunities***

While Tourism and Visitor Experience, Transportation Logistics and Regional Industry Cluster Support were clearly the best current opportunities, this does not mean other industries will not be pursued or welcomed to Marana. With limited resources it is critical for the Town of Marana to act strategically and focus its efforts. The development of quality employment opportunities created by businesses that align with community values is the ultimate goal.

The following business opportunities will require that Marana take steps to position the community to be competitive before justifying expending resources to initiate a proactive business recruitment strategy.

## **Environmental Technology**

The Environmental Technology industry focuses on businesses that conserve resources, reduce waste, and clean up the environment. Solar industries were determined to have the most potential based on Marana's location and the current focus of state and federal government programs to promote alternative energy sources. It was determined that Marana may not be the best place for generation of solar power due to the large land area required for solar fields, but equipment manufacturing and testing could be opportunities.

There may also be opportunities to partner with The University of Arizona, TREO, Trico Electric Cooperative and Tucson Electric Power related to current research initiatives.

## **Bio- and Medical Sciences/Analytical Instruments (medical devices, etc.)**

As the population ages and medical technology advances, this industry is expected to continue to grow. There is already quite a bit of activity in these industries in the Tucson area. There are opportunities to complement this industry where it is already established in Oro Valley. The University of Arizona has also developed facilities and support systems to attract companies that specialize in these industries.

Workforce development is essential to this industry. Businesses within this industry require highly skilled workers that typically are between the ages of 35 and 45 with advanced degrees. These types of workers are attracted by to a community because of quality public schools, availability of medical services, active lifestyle and a fun, interesting downtown.

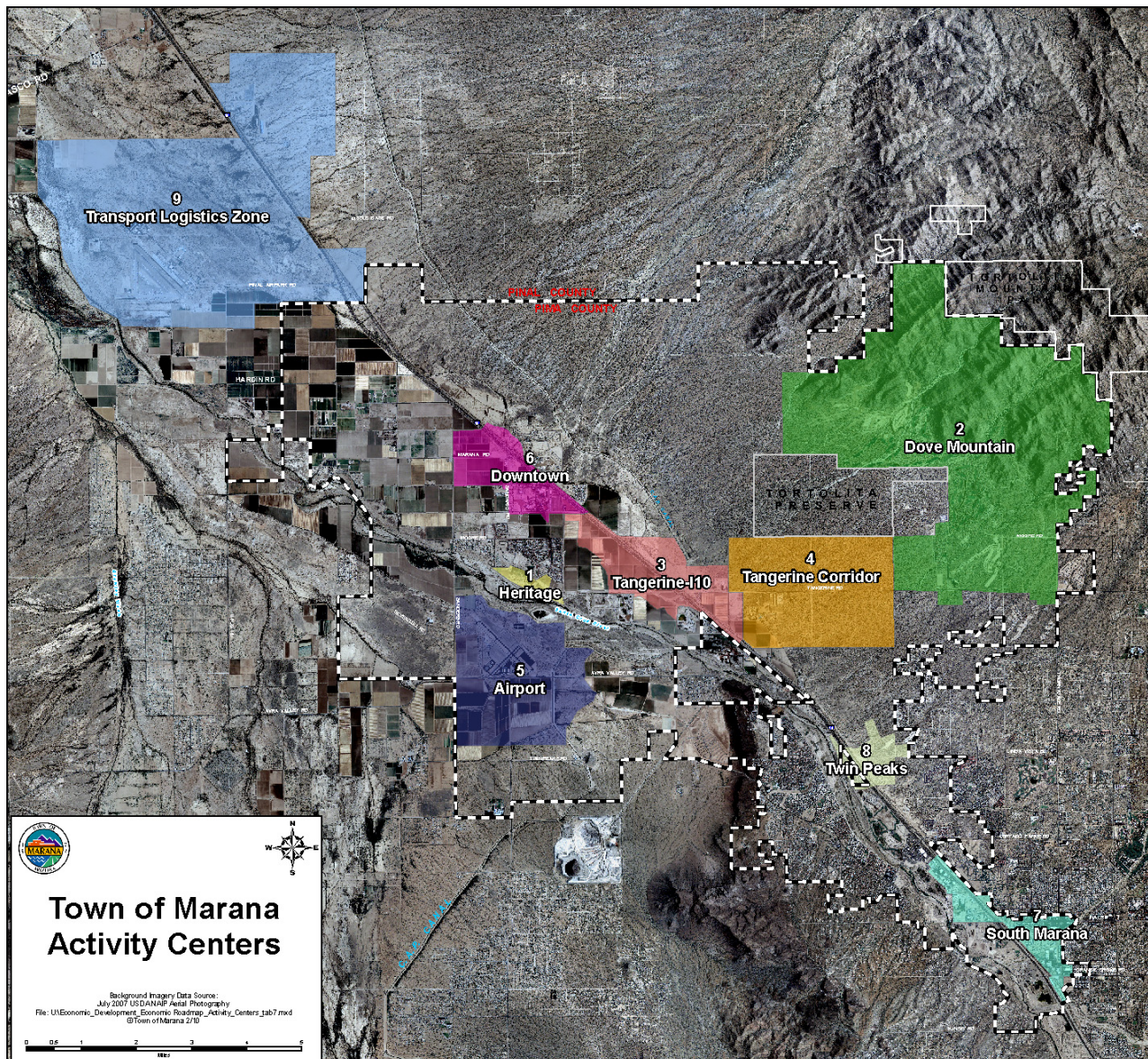
If concepts identified in Marana's community vision and Strategic Plan are achieved, this will result in a community that is desirable for these types of firms. The Town must continue to build the foundations that will at some point position Marana to aggressively pursue business development within this specific industry.



### III. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY CENTERS

Due to the unique characteristics within the Marana Planning Area, nine Economic Activity Centers have been identified, each having its own set of opportunities and challenges. This level of comprehensive planning allows the Town to focus its investment and resources on creating a variety of unique places that will attract commerce and economic activities. The intent of the Activity Center concept is to target specific businesses or encourage appropriate types of development to locate in a specific Activity Center. The ultimate outcome is the ability for Marana to create a well-rounded community with appropriate locations to support a variety of economic development opportunities that are compatible with surrounding land uses and have the necessary infrastructure support.

Each of the Activity Centers will require more specific area planning to address land uses, zoning and infrastructure development. The Activity Centers will need to be prioritized to allocate resources to implement the specific planning processes.





## *A. Activity Center Locations*

The following is a detailed description and location map for each of the nine activity centers identified.

### **1: Heritage Activity Center**

The 30 acre Heritage Park serves as the focal point for showcasing the region's rich heritage and history. A trail system connecting various interpretive exhibits along the river will provide an exciting and informative eco- and heritage-tourism experience that will be a destination for visitors. Various additional interpretive sites showcasing the area's heritage will also be distributed throughout the community.

In conjunction with the Heritage Park and other amenities celebrating Marana's centuries of agrarian history, local growers' produce will be sold through local Farmers' Markets and events.

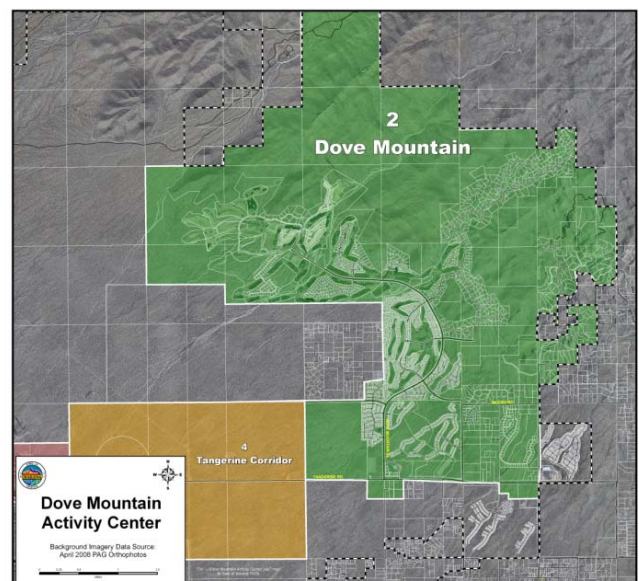


Techniques should be explored (e.g., signage and design standards) to identify this area as Marana's Heritage Center that attracts visitors to the community but also serves to bring the community together and create a sense of pride for residents and the business community.

### **2: Dove Mountain Activity Center**

This Activity Center is intended to be a world-class destination offering tourism and experience opportunities with its resort focus. The area currently includes quality residential development which is expected to continue. Improved access is needed with the expansion of Tangerine Road as an east-west corridor and Camino de Marana as a north-south corridor. Much of the area is currently undeveloped and provides an opportunity to create the type of development consistent with that which has already occurred.

The Sonoran Desert experience will be an integral component of the development within the Dove Mountain Activity Center. This Activity Center will continue to develop high quality



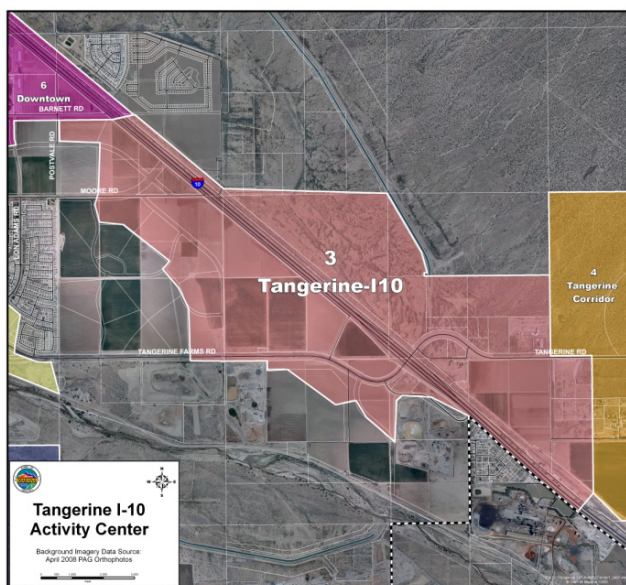
resorts and related hospitality industry commerce that is reflective of the natural setting. The Dove Mountain area is unique in Marana and this development standard should be strongly reflected.

Future planning must ensure that there are adequate residential services and a mix of activities that will appeal to visitors (e.g. nighttime activities, unique shopping and entertainment opportunities). Design guidelines should be enforced to ensure that the natural and built environment are integrated and enhance the area's visual appearance. Collaboration with Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), which holds much of the land on the Tangerine Corridor, will be essential.

### 3: Tangerine Road I-10 Activity Center

The configuration of this Activity Center was determined by the Council-approved Single Central Business District. A new I-10 interchange that addresses the railroad crossing issue (at-grade rail crossing adjacent to interchange) is essential for this Activity Center to reach its potential. Plans to build the new interchange are completed and funding for this project should continue to be pursued. This area offers mixed-use opportunities that include residential, commercial and employment area development.

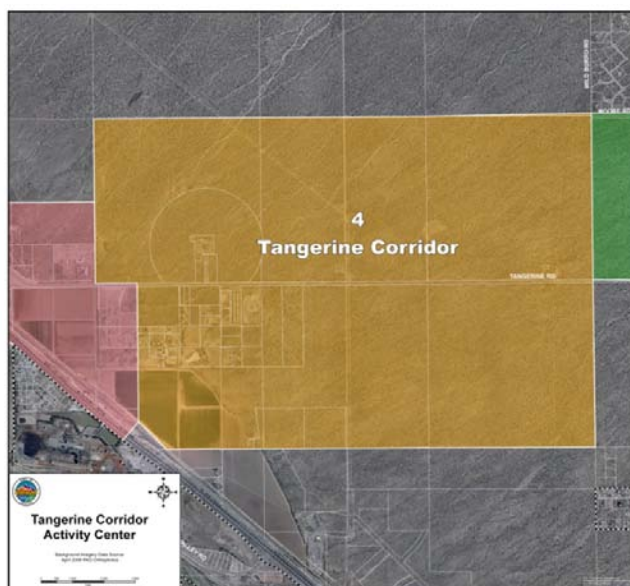
Water, sewer and other infrastructure should be planned, programmed and installed in coordination with the interchange reconstruction.



### 4: Tangerine Corridor Activity Center

This area along Tangerine Road between the Dove Mountain and Tangerine Road and I-10 Activity Centers will serve as a key location for high technology businesses and business park development. The corridor will be sensitively planned with setbacks and clustered development so as not to develop in a linear, strip commercial-type pattern.

This area will also serve as a “transition corridor” between the employment center development in the Tangerine Road and I-10 Activity Center and the recreation, resort and tourism amenities in the Dove Mountain Activity Center



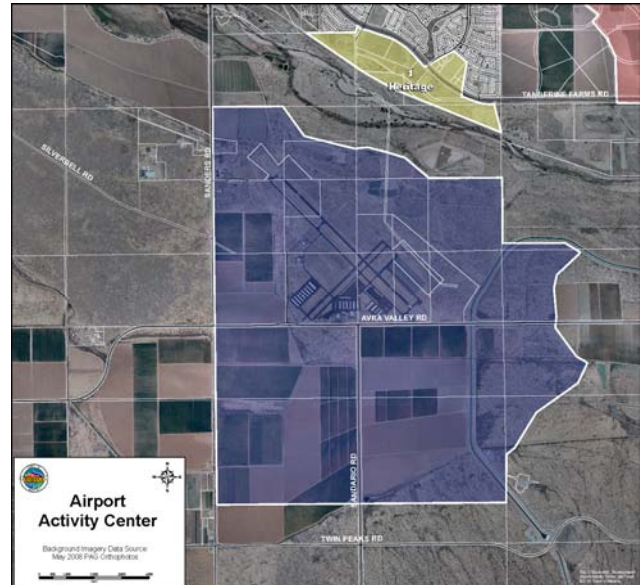


Development of basic and telecommunication infrastructure will be required along the length of the corridor to ensure that the Town can maximize economic opportunities.

## 5: Airport Activity Center

The Airport Activity Center is anchored by the Marana Airport and its 6,900 foot main runway. It is a tremendous asset for Marana and a major piece of the Transportation Logistics strategy. It offers opportunities for manufacturing and distribution and is poised to become a center for corporate and executive travel.

Improvements in basic infrastructure are needed and much of the land around the airport is managed by ASLD. Close collaboration with ASLD will be required to ensure that the Activity Center reaches its potential. Developing move-in-ready buildings at the airport will place Marana at the forefront of attracting quality firms that cannot wait to build their own facilities.

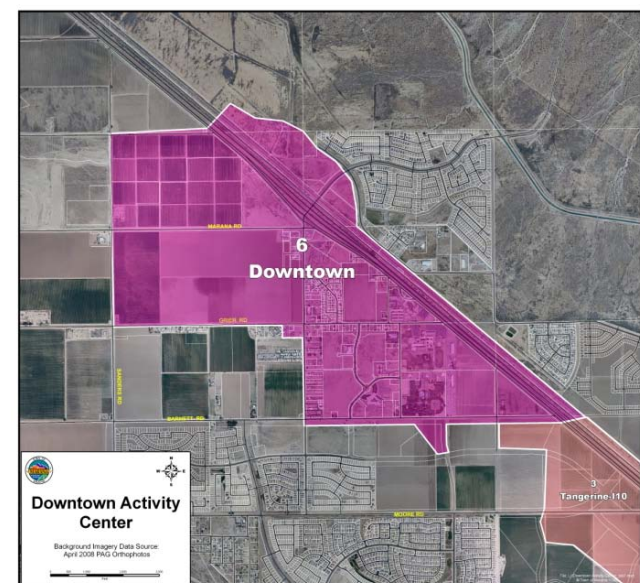


This Activity Center also includes a Bureau of Reclamation site that is planned to be developed into a destination amateur sports park which is intended to draw visitors and participants to Marana.

## 6: Downtown Activity Center

Creating a thriving Activity Center as the core of the community is critical for establishing a strong community identity and sustainable economic base. The heart of Marana historically was where regional farmers came together to share information and sell goods. It provided the sense of community within a vast agricultural area. Establishing and capturing this strong sense of place is critical for Marana residents as well as for visitors.

The municipal complex and health center are the first major investments in Downtown Marana. Major infrastructure upgrades are needed and improved access from I-10 must be developed. The area has multiple landowners that will play an important role in the implementation of the vision for Downtown



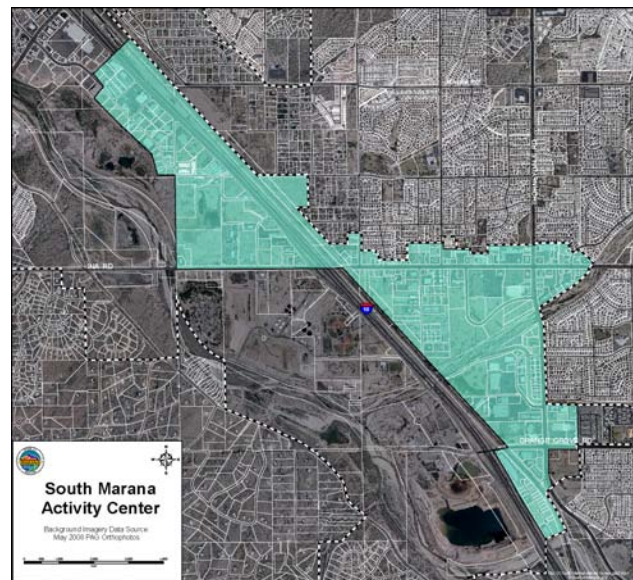
Marana. Successful downtowns need more than infrastructure, they need people. The Downtown Activity Center will include a strong residential component that will create 24/7 activity that will help local businesses succeed. It is anticipated that the activities and establishments in this Activity Center will support the Tourism and Visitor Experience target industry.

Downtown Marana as currently envisioned is a large Activity Center, identified as part of the Council-approved Single Central Business District. This area can include a variety of development areas tied together with unifying design features and a multimodal transportation network that might include a trolley or other form of transit and pedestrian system. Comprehensive planning and creative techniques will need to be employed to achieve “walk-ability” and a unified design theme.

## 7: South Marana Activity Center

Much of this area was built before being annexed by the Town of Marana and is some of the oldest development in the community. Over time, this Activity Center will need refurbishing to remain competitive with new shopping and activity areas being developed in other parts of the community and region. Appropriate redevelopment will ensure that new and existing buildings are developed or redeveloped according to the Town of Marana’s codes and standards.

The area east of I-10 continues to enjoy a tremendous amount of traffic and commerce. There is also a successful business park development west of I-10.



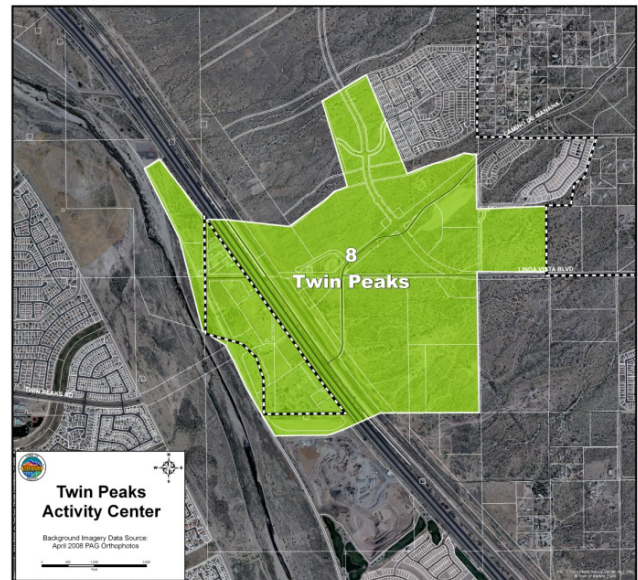
South Marana and the “Golden Triangle” area include a mix of retail and commercial businesses that has historically served as the business hub of the northern Tucson metropolitan area. In order to ensure continued development and redevelopment, improvements to Ina Road will be required. It will be critical to improve circulation patterns in the area and to beautify the corridor to spur additional private sector investment.



## 8: Twin Peaks Activity Center

A key east-west roadway connection will be completed when the Twin Peaks Interchange project is finished (expected late 2010). This important connection will serve as a catalyst for new development. There has been considerable interest in businesses locating in this general area. This Activity Center already has some industrial activities on the west side of I-10 and offers retail and residential development opportunities on the east side of I-10.

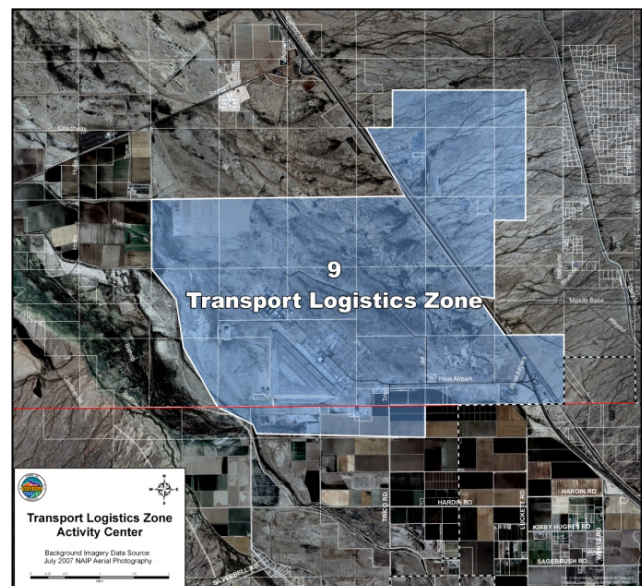
Once additional transportation improvements are completed, more parcels will have access and can be developed. There is a need for water and sewer infrastructure on the west side of I-10.



## 9: Transportation Logistics Zone Activity Center

While currently out of the town's corporate limits, this Activity Center's proximity to I-10, Pinal Airpark and planned rail system improvements provides tremendous opportunities for intermodal transportation, logistics and freight activities. The future potential of this Activity Center may hinge upon the Town's decision to annex and its success in annexing all or part of the area. Even if this area does not become part of the Town of Marana, the regional impacts of successful development in this Activity Center could be very positive for Marana.

It is important that this area be planned carefully to ensure a compatible land use pattern. Transportation Logistics are typically heavy industrial uses and incompatible land use patterns such as residential neighborhoods or schools might jeopardize the economic development potential of this Activity Center. This type of economic development takes a long time to occur and the area must be protected from incompatible land uses.



## ***B. Integration of Target Industries and Activity Centers***

In order to tie together the Target Industry and Activity Center concepts, it is important to identify which of the Activity Centers are currently or could be prepared to be best suited to host the Target Industries.

The following matrix provides direction for locating the Target Industries within the various Activity Centers. These recommended locations (indicated in orange) and the needs for the Target Industries should be recognized as the specific area planning for each Activity Center is carried out.

**Target Industry – Activity Center Matrix**

<i>Activity Center</i>	<b>Transportation Logistics</b>	<b>Tourism and Visitor Experience</b>	<b>Regional Industry Cluster Support</b>	<b>Environmental Technology</b>	<b>Bio- and Medical Sciences/ Analytical Instruments</b>
<b>1. Heritage</b>					
<b>2. Dove Mountain</b>					
<b>3. Tangerine I-10</b>					
<b>4. Tangerine Corridor</b>					
<b>5. Airport</b>					
<b>6. Downtown</b>					
<b>7. South Marana</b>					
<b>8. Twin Peaks</b>					
<b>9. Transportation Logistics Zone</b>					

### **Matrix Highlights**

- The Heritage and Dove Mountain Activity Centers are expected to be Tourism and Visitor Experience focused.
- Due to the importance of the Tangerine Road and I-10 interchange and the availability of vacant land, a mix of uses is anticipated.

- The Tangerine Corridor Activity Center is anticipated to be career-based employment focused
- In addition to Transportation Logistics, the Airport Activity Center provides opportunities for Regional Industry Support in the aerospace sector.
- The Downtown Activity Center offers Tourism and Visitor Experience opportunities and there is potential in the Bio- and Medical Sciences industry sector in conjunction with the medical center.
- As the retail and service sectors expand in the community, some of the retail stores and shopping centers in South Marana may be available for employment uses providing new employment opportunities.
- The Twin Peaks Activity Center offers mixed use employment opportunities in addition to commercial and retail uses serving adjacent residential areas.
- The Transportation Logistics Zone Activity Center could provide Regional Industry Cluster support opportunities in addition to transportation related activities.

## IV. ROADMAP FOCUS AREAS

To organize the actions and activities that will be required to expand Marana's economy, Focus Areas were identified to provide the framework for the Action Plan. Focus Areas are defined as strategic initiatives that Marana will address to assist in implementing the economic development vision. The five Focus Areas identified are:

1. Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion
2. Resource/Business Support
3. Workforce Development
4. Tourism and Visitor Experience
5. Community and Infrastructure Development

Within each of the Focus Areas a goal is identified. The goals describe the ultimate desired outcome for Marana.

### Focus Area 1: Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion



The goal of this Focus Area is to “bring new businesses and jobs to Marana while supporting the existing base of sustainable and thriving firms.” This will take a collaborative local and regional effort utilizing all of Marana's partners.

While pursuing new businesses to locate in Marana is an important part of the overall strategy, focus should not be lost on providing assistance and a sound business climate for those firms that have already chosen Marana. It is much easier and economical to help existing firms expand and create jobs than to compete to attract new firms.

### Focus Area 2: Resource/Business Support



The goal of this Focus Area is to “position Marana as the region's leading, proactive business partner.” Marana wants to be known as the place to be from a regional business perspective. To attain this, the community will need to build a reputation for providing superior services, support, and assistance and be able to partner with businesses to find innovative solutions to complex issues and challenges.

### Focus Area 3: Workforce Development



The goal of this Focus Area is to “work with local and regional partners to maintain a highly qualified and diversified workforce tailored to the target industries and local business activities.” Marana desires to ensure that its residents are qualified to take jobs being created through the *Roadmap's* implementation. There is also a need to have the workforce evolve and adjust to change and new technologies.

Due to advancements in telecommunication, many businesses can locate just about anywhere. Cost, proximity to markets and access to resources used to be the key business location factors. Today, it is the quality of the workforce and the opportunities available to improve it.

In addition, businesses are looking for locations that provide a comprehensive, sound education system for families and young people.

#### **Focus Area 4: Tourism and Visitor Experience**



The goal of this Focus Area is to “be the region’s premier leisure, recreation and group meeting destination.” Attracting tourists and visitors to Marana is critical to the local economy. They bring basic dollars to the community without having to provide full time infrastructure and services.

A high quality tourism destination also brings business owners, executives, and investors to the community. Showcasing Marana to these decision makers will pay dividends in the business recruitment area.

#### **Focus Area 5: Community and Infrastructure Development**



The goal for this Focus Area is “within the purview of municipal government, provide quality services to support economic development efforts.” Basic infrastructure and services are expected by business and without them the community is at a disadvantage. The lifecycle of innovation has become much shorter and firms need to be nimble and able to move quickly.

The Town will need to identify a systematic funding program to proactively develop and expand its basic infrastructure and services.

# V. MARANA'S ECONOMIC ROADMAP ACTION PLAN

Each Focus Area contains initiatives that are defined as broad tasks that need to be accomplished to assist in the pursuit of the related goal. Action Strategies are then presented with those in orange print being steps that can be undertaken immediately with minimal direct costs to set the foundation for the plan's implementation.



## **Focus Area 1: Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion**

**Goal: Bring new businesses and jobs to Marana while supporting the existing base of sustainable and thriving firms.**

**Initiative 1.1      Develop and implement basic tools to market the community and provide assistance to existing businesses.**

Action Strategies    **1.1.1 Work collaboratively and explore partnership opportunities with other regional entities for business attraction.**  
1.1.2 Develop a community brand and marketing plan for business attraction, retention and expansion.  
1.1.3 Develop and implement a formal business retention and expansion program.

**Initiative 1.2      Create a culture that encourages local businesses to be involved in community initiatives and events.**

Action Strategies    **1.2.1 Maintain an aggressive communications and promotion program with local businesses.**  
1.2.2 Develop an approach to attract corporate headquarters to Marana.

**Initiative 1.3      Identify and enhance a variety of places to locate new businesses.**

Action Strategies    **1.3.1 Work with the local real estate community to maintain a current database of available sites and buildings for locating companies.**  
1.3.2 Devise and implement a Town land acquisition strategy to provide key locations that may facilitate appropriate business development projects.  
1.3.3 Comprehensively plan the nine identified Activity Centers to accommodate new and expanding businesses.  
1.3.4 Perform cost/benefit analyses to explore the feasibility of annexing areas within Economic Activity Centers that are not in the town's municipal boundaries. Work with regional partners to implement annexation procedures if deemed appropriate.

**Initiative 1.4**      **Maximize economic opportunities presented by the community's major transportation infrastructure (Interstate, railroad, airport) to attract business and jobs.**

**Action Strategies**      **1.4.1 Ensure long term viability of the Marana Airport through infrastructure investment, land use planning, zoning decisions and promotion to prospective developers that may be influenced by airport operations.**  
**1.4.2 Work closely with regional partners (e.g., Union Pacific Railroad, Arizona Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation Authority) to upgrade transportation facilities and improve regional connections.**  
**1.4.3 Through the General Plan, reserve large parcels of land to develop Transportation Logistics types of projects.**  
1.4.4 Develop a Transportation Logistics marketing plan.  
1.4.5 Develop an intermodal strategy that integrates the movement of freight (i.e. ground, rail and air).

**Initiative 1.5**      **Maximize economic opportunities to attract business suppliers to support regional industries.**

**Action Strategies**      **1.5.1 Interview existing regional businesses to understand supplier and service needs that are currently being outsourced to other regions. The result of these interviews will be an analysis identifying service and supply chain gaps.**  
1.5.2 Develop a Regional Industry Cluster Support recruitment strategy.



## **Focus Area 2:    Resource/Business Support**

**Goal: Position Marana as the region's leading, proactive business partner.**

**Initiative 2.1**      **Maintain policies, resources and tools that promote economic development.**

**Action Strategies**      **2.1.1 Maintain equitable and business-friendly tax policies that balance competitiveness with revenue generation.**  
**2.1.2 Maintain a streamlined development review and approval process (including opportunities for fast tracking plans and permits).**  
**2.1.3 Maintain a competitive development fee structure.**  
2.1.4 Maintain an up-to-date portfolio of business incentives and policies and provide clear guidelines for their use.  
2.1.5 Implement a land acquisition strategy (land banking) to provide key locations that could facilitate implementation of desired projects.  
2.1.6 Maintain a package of available tools and research best practices to identify new business assistance options.



- 2.1.7 Create and maintain a database of state and federal funding sources and programs that assist in meeting businesses' needs (e.g., financing, training, services).
- 2.1.8 Use all legislative resources available and collaborate with other entities to lobby for the preservation of existing business attraction incentive programs and the development of new ones.
- 2.1.9 Develop a policy and funding source to assist with employee relocation expenses for companies that bring high-wage jobs to Marana.



### **Focus Area 3: Workforce Development**

**Goal: Work with local and regional partners to maintain highly qualified and diversified workforce tailored to the target industries and local business activities.**

**Initiative 3.1 Support local education service providers to expand the capabilities of the workforce.**

- Action Strategies**
- 3.1.1 Hold periodic meetings with local and regional education service providers to discuss issues and opportunities for Marana to achieve economic development goals.**
  - 3.1.2 Explore opportunities with Pima Community College, The University of Arizona, and Marana Unified School District to offer classes and training programs at Town of Marana municipal facilities and/or local businesses.
  - 3.1.3 Work closely with Pima Community College, The University of Arizona and Marana Unified School District to develop curriculum and training programs tailored to local needs and businesses.
  - 3.1.4 Work closely with Pima Community College and The University of Arizona to develop curriculum and training programs tailored to local needs and businesses.

**Initiative 3.2 Increase focus and investment in workforce development.**

- Action Strategies**
- 3.2.1 Maintain a Workforce Development and Job Training Council (identified as Science and Technology Council in the Strategic Plan) that will hold regular meetings with the intent to match major employers with education partners to create workforce solutions.
  - 3.2.2 Develop a Town of Marana dedicated funding source for job training.

**Initiative 3.3 Attract additional educational and training institutions to Marana.**

- Action Strategies**
- 3.3.1 Develop a marketing strategy for attracting education and training institutions.
  - 3.3.2 Working with area businesses, develop and maintain a current education and training needs assessment and include in the marketing strategy.

- 3.3.3 Identify potential locations for campuses and training centers and work with private and public sector entities to provide appropriate infrastructure.



## **Focus Area 4: Tourism and Visitor Experience**

**Goal: Be the region's premier leisure, recreation and group meeting destination.**

**Initiative 4.1 Develop Marana's tourism and visitor experience "product."**

- Action Strategies
- 4.1.1 Establish a local "Tourism Team" to carry out specific tasks and to represent Marana in coordinating with regional state tourism promotion entities.**
  - 4.1.2 Work with and support groups and organizations (e.g. non-profits and historical society) to expand heritage tourism.**
  - 4.1.3 Develop a community "brand" for Marana.
  - 4.1.4 Work with the Chamber of Commerce and local hospitality industry to develop a tourism and visitor experience marketing strategy.
  - 4.1.5 Integrate heritage information and heritage-related activities and events throughout the community.

**Initiative 4.2 Develop community amenities and facilities that make Marana attractive to visitors while enhancing the resident experience.**

- Action Strategies
- 4.2.1 Capitalize on opportunities to jointly develop recreation facilities with private sector partners and other agencies.**
  - 4.2.2 Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities and amenities.
  - 4.2.3 Upgrade the community's parks and recreation facilities.
  - 4.2.4 Create a unique Downtown as an amenity for residents and a destination for visitors to shop and attend entertainment venues that generate revenues for the Town.
  - 4.2.5 Become a destination for trade shows, conferences and other similar major events that will bring visitors to Marana.
  - 4.2.6 Complete the Heritage Tourism Park and associated Santa Cruz River shared use path for use by residents and visitors.
  - 4.2.7 Complete the Tortolita Mountain/northeast Marana trail system (extending through both Pima and Pinal counties) to be used as a major tourism and recreation attraction.



## **Focus Area 5: Community and Infrastructure Development**

**Goal: Within the purview of municipal government, provide quality services to support economic development efforts.**

**Initiative 5.1 Systematically identify, prioritize, and implement infrastructure projects that support economic development goals, seeking public-private partnerships and creative financing arrangements where possible.**

Action Strategies	<p><b>5.1.1 Maintain planning policies to ensure utility availability to serve future development.</b></p> <p>5.1.2 Maintain a capital improvements plan for each of the nine identified Activity Centers.</p> <p>5.1.3 Maximize state and federal funding and loan programs for infrastructure development.</p>
<b>Initiative 5.2</b>	<b>Build partnerships with regional and state infrastructure entities.</b>
Action Strategies	<p><b>5.2.1 Actively participate in efforts to enhance the regional transportation system.</b></p> <p><b>5.2.2 Collaborate and strengthen partnerships with private utility providers to meet Marana's economic development goals.</b></p> <p>5.2.3 Improve relationships with other governmental entities to facilitate joint infrastructure development projects.</p>
<b>Initiative 5.3</b>	<b>Maintain local control of public utility resources where possible and logical to ensure an efficient development process and support community goals.</b>
Action Strategies	<p><b>5.3.1 Secure an adequate water supply and improve the Marana water distribution system.</b></p> <p>5.3.2 Perform a comprehensive analysis of all utility services provided to determine ways to gain more local control and influence.</p>
<b>Initiative 5.4</b>	<b>Develop a strong community foundation that will result in a quality business climate.</b>
Action Strategies	<p><b>5.4.1 Maintain high-quality public safety services.</b></p> <p><b>5.4.2 Collaborate with regional partners to maintain air and water quality.</b></p> <p>5.4.3 Implement a community beautification program.</p>

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION

Economic development is not a short term effort. Many projects will take years if not decades to complete. Attracting the right kind of jobs and commerce to Marana will take patience, commitment, perseverance and the political will to make investments that may not bear fruit for many years or political terms.

Ensuring that the *Roadmap* is implemented is dependent upon the identification and support of a responsible entity or entities to carry out its directives. Additionally, a dedicated, stable, long-term funding source to carry out the *Roadmap*'s implementation is required.

The implementation of the *Roadmap* can be achieved through numerous different structures and methods; reallocation of current staff, addition of new staff, creating a new department, or the formation of a non-profit corporation are all feasible options. An incremental approach using several of these concepts over time should also be considered.

### *A. Implementation Check List*

Whatever the ultimate structure, there are several capabilities, functions and actions that will be necessary to successfully implement the *Roadmap*. These are contained in the Implementation Check List.

- ✓ Identify a knowledgeable and experienced point of contact for economic leads that will represent the Town and be responsible for compiling and disseminating information and data. Provide resources so that accurate and timely information is available.
- ✓ Establish a position of authority with decision-making ability to implement economic development action strategies.
- ✓ Assemble an economic development response team comprised of experts and representatives from staff and primary and secondary implementation partners based on the needs of the project.
- ✓ Maintain a streamlined development review and approval process.
- ✓ Develop a process to evaluate Marana's economic development progress and ensure accountability.
- ✓ Make a long-term financial and organizational commitment to economic development.
- ✓ Designate a "keeper" of the *Roadmap* to provide oversight and ensure that it is implemented.
- ✓ Establish networks to effectively collaborate with regional partners.
- ✓ Offer ongoing education to the public on the importance of economic development.
- ✓ Ensure trans-departmental involvement through training and information programs.
- ✓ Define and solidify relationships and expectations with TREO and the Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- ✓ Present the *Roadmap* to all Primary and Support Implementation Partners and these groups and entities should be communicated with on a regular basis.

- ✓ Make reports as necessary to the Town Council and Business and Economic Development Commission regarding progress on implementation of the *Roadmap*.

## ***B. Implementation Partnerships***

In addition to the Town's efforts, many other entities play key roles in the *Roadmap*'s successful implementation. Some entities and organizations will play a major role (Primary Implementation Partners) while others will play a supportive role (Support Implementation Partners) in implementation.

### **Primary Implementation Partners Roles and Responsibilities**

Primary Partners will be actively involved in the plan's implementation on a regular basis. They will be counted on to provide information, support, knowledge and expertise.

#### **Marana Business and Economic Development Commission**

- Serve as the keeper of the *Roadmap* through identifying priorities, ensuring accountability and measuring success.
- Assist in promoting *Roadmap* implementation with the Marana and Southern Arizona business communities.
- Lead the periodic *Roadmap* update process and recommend changes to the Town Council for consideration.
- Provide a citizen and local business perspective on the Town's economic development efforts.
- Educate and inform the public on the importance of economic development.

#### **Marana Chamber of Commerce**

- Educate and inform the public on the importance of economic development.
- Serve as the local small business advocate and liaison.
- Serve as the initial point of contact for small businesses considering the community.
- Welcome and provide community information to new businesses to Marana.
- Serve as a resource center for small businesses.
- Participate in promoting Marana.
- Participate in implementing the Tourism and Visitor Experience Focus Area.
- Participate in implementing the Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion Focus Area

#### **Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities (TREO)**

- Support the implementation of the Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion Focus Area.
- Provide regional marketing and promotion.
- Develop and disseminate in-depth employment and industry data.
- Provide professional economic development expertise.

- Assist in recruiting new businesses.
- Work to strengthen regional relationships.
- Serve as lobbyist for regional economic development efforts.
- Host best economic development practices tours.
- Support the implementation of enterprise and empowerment zones, workforce development and foreign trade zones.

#### **Local and Regional Utility Providers**

- Support the implementation of the Community and Infrastructure Development Focus Area.
- Provide basic infrastructure support and information.
- Serve as a collaborative economic development partner.
- Share information with perspective businesses.
- Provide infrastructure planning expertise.
- Serve as a lobbyist for regional economic development efforts.

#### **Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau (MTCVB)**

- Support the implementation of the Tourism and Visitor Experience Focus Area.
- Implement marketing strategies of Marana assets
- Recruitment/bookings for conferences and meetings to be held in Marana.
- Regional promotion as a visitor destination.
- Support the expansion of tourism and visitor experience venues and activities.

#### **Education Providers (local schools, vocational and training, community college, university)**

- Support the implementation of the Workforce Development Focus Area.
- Provide quality basic education services.
- Develop curriculum and degree programs to meet local economic development needs.
- Coordinate with the Town, local businesses and other entities to provide education and training programs.
- Participate in mentoring and apprenticeship programs within Marana.
- Maintain a high quality K-12 education system to serve the community that is attractive to families and can aid in business recruitment.

### **Support Implementation Partners Roles and Responsibilities**

Support Partners will provide support for plan implementation. Depending on the project or initiative, their involvement level could change significantly.

#### **Pima and Pinal Counties**

- Provide planning and regulatory functions and basic infrastructure and services.
- Provide support to Marana's economic development effort.
- Collaborate on mutually supportive community and economic development projects.

**Primary Education Providers**

- Provide quality local primary education.

**Regional Tourist Attractions**

- Provide venues to expand the tourism and experience industry.
- Participate in joint promotional opportunities.

**Surrounding Municipal Governments**

- Support Marana's community and economic development efforts.
- Participate in mutually beneficial joint venture opportunities.

**Tucson International Airport and Pinal Airpark**

- Coordination to ensure long term viability of air commerce in the region.

**Arizona State Land Department**

- Successful coordination and joint planning of State Trust lands within the Marana Planning Area will be necessary to produce win-win projects.

**Arizona Department of Transportation**

- Continued improvements to the I-10 corridor.
- Improve airport planning and development.
- Maximize the state's rail assets.

**Other State and Federal Agencies**

- Depending on the issues being addressed, various state and federal agencies will require communication and collaboration activities.

**Pima Association of Governments (PAG)**

- Support Marana's community and economic development efforts.

**Central Arizona Association of Governments (CAAG)**

- Support Marana's community and economic development efforts.

**Central Arizona Regional Economic Development Foundation (CAREDF)**

- Support Marana's economic development efforts.



### **Financial and Real Estate Sectors**

- Ensure availability of financing for business activities.
- Support business development and Marana's economic development efforts.

### **Institutes and Foundations**

- Organizations such as Sonoran Institute and other specific issue advocacy groups can be important advocates and supporters of Marana's economic development efforts.

## ***C. Roadmap Updates***

In order to remain relevant and effective in a rapidly changing environment, this *Roadmap* will need to be periodically updated. At the direction of the Town Council, the Marana Business and Economic Development Commission will be responsible for working with Town Staff to update the *Roadmap*. As appropriate, Marana's Implementation Partners should also be involved or consulted during the update process.

The update process should take into consideration the following factors:

- Changes to the Marana Strategic Plan and its direction
- Updates and changes to other key planning documents
- New research
- Demographic and/or socio-economic changes
- Completed tasks
- Challenges and difficulties identified
- Regional, statewide, national, and international trends
- New opportunities

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